

Brief view of American chattelized humanity

A BRIEF VIEW OF AMERICAN CHATTELIZED HUMANITY.

BY JONATHAN WALKER.

A BRIEF VIEW OF AMERICAN CHATTELIZED HUMANITY, AND ITS SUPPORTS.

BY JONATHAN WALKER, Late of Florida, where he was put in the Pillory, fined, branded with Hot Irons, imprisoned eleven months, &c. &c., by the Government of the United States, for an attempted act of Humanity.

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PREFACE.

In submitting this brief review to the public, it is proper for me to say, that I have made copious extracts from the letters of Henry C. Wright to James Haughton of Dublin, Ireland, published in Scotland, and circulated extensively in the three kingdoms, which should be in the hands of every American, but as yet they have been seen but by a few individuals in the United States.

Mr. Wright is too well known, both in this country and in Europe, as an intelligent, active, and devoted reformer, to need further mention from me in this place.

A Brief View.

Having for many years carefully observed the workings, movements, increase and extension of the system of American Chattel Slavery, as countenanced, upheld, supported

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and cherished by the American people generally, at the sacrifice of truth, right principle, the better feelings of our nature and true Christianity; and having also observed the great degree of ignorance and indifference which pervade the Northern States on this subject, I feel urged to make every effort in my power to expose, to all those who are willing to examine, the baleful character of the system, and their connection with this “overflowing scourge” which has plunged us into deep disgrace in the eyes of the civilized world, and into awful guilt at the bar of our common humanity. I therefore submit the following pages to the careful consideration of the reader, leaving him to decide as to his duty in future with his conscience and his God.

It is natural for mankind to evade the exposition of their errors, and to shield themselves from blame, and consequently recourse is had to some organization for refuge, and constant effort is made to get rid of individual accountability by comparing themselves with others, or by charging their guilt upon corporations, thus losing sight of their individuality. What is an organized body composed of? Does it not consist of individuals? If these individuals be of the right kind, then will the organized body be of the right kind, but if otherwise so will the body be; like begets like. But it may be said that we should not expect too much of human organizations, that individuals are not infallible, and their being organized can not make them so. True. But should not these bodies be as pure as the materials of which they are composed? If an organization, instead of making better, corrupts those over whom its power is exercised, the sooner it is disorganized the better; and when this is apparent, it is the duty of those who see it, to exert their influence to destroy such institutions, and to induce Others to do the same. For while we constitute a part of this body, we are doing something to sustain it; if not directly, indirectly; if not by our own exertions, by our agents, which is the same thing. For voluntarily employing others to do any thing for us, is equivalent to doing it ourselves. Being a part of an organized body does not destroy our individual responsibility. Hence being members of the organized government of the United States, we individually partake in its rights and wrongs. In reference to this subject, let us weigh ourselves in the balance of truth, and make up our

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decision according to the light that is in us. For this purpose I will submit the following questions:

Who are the American chattelized slaves?

What is their condition?

By whose support are they held in bondage, and how long shall they remain there by our aid?

That they are human beings no one will deny. But we are told they are Africans. With the same propriety may it be said that we are Englishmen; for about the same time the first emigrants were landing in the old Bay State, and introducing their civilization and religion to the natives with powder and bullets, the first cargo of slaves was being landed at Jamestown in Virginia. Since that time both branches of the business have continued.^{*} To be sure, we have not prosecuted the foreign slave trade to any great extent since 1808, but that was abolished and denounced as unjust and illegal only to facilitate the breeding and trade at home, as may be seen from the debates in Congress when the subject was under discussion in 1798. One Speaker from Virginia said:—"That Virginia had her complement of slaves already, and was careless about increasing her stock, as the natural increase (*the breeding at home*,) would be sufficient; but gentlemen ought to let their neighbors (the more southern states) get supplied, before

* Warring with the Indians, and enslaving the descendants of Africa.

5 they imposed such a burden upon the importation." Several others spoke to the same effect, while a few had the courage to doubt the rightfulness of plundering Africa of her sons and daughters, and making merchandise of them in our markets, at auction to the highest bidder, in lots to suit purchasers. To show their drift I give the views of one speaker. He said, "We have no right to consider whether the importation of slaves be proper or not; the Constitution gives us no power on that point." Mr. Pinckney of S. C.,

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one of the framers of the Constitution, publicly and boldly avowed, "By this settlement (the compact) we have secured an unlimited importation of slaves for twenty years." * Thus the chattel slaves of this country were composed of kidnapped, defenceless foreigners and their helpless children, up to 1808, when the opposition to the importation increased, so that in 1820, that trade which had been licenced and protected by this government, was pronounced piracy, and punishable with death.

* These speakers, it seems, sought shelter behind organization.

When this government was formed, there were about 300,000 slaves in this country. Since that time they have increased tenfold, and there are now but very few in the United States, except those who have been born here, and who consequently inherit the rights of subjects and citizens. Who that ever glanced at the Declaration of Independence would not readily conclude that these American born people were, according to that Declaration, "entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?" They have never in any way forfeited their rights or liberties by revolt, by conspiracy, or by any contract or bargain which they have participated in, so that they always have been, and are now, honestly, justly, and rightfully entitled to the same privileges, liberties and rights, that any other Americans are.

What is the condition of the American chattel slave? To describe his condition fully would occupy much more space than could be crowded into this brief work. I shall therefore only notice a few features as samples, and from 1* 6 which the reader can draw his conclusions of what their condition must necessarily be. The laws of the states where the system is located, and the testimony of slavebreeders and traders against themselves, will be all that is necessary to excite the deepest contempt in every candid mind. The laws of Louisiana provide that "a slave is one that is in the power of his master to whom he belongs: the master may sell him, dispose of his person, his industry and labor; he can do nothing, possess nor acquire anything but what must belong to his master." "Slaves are incapable of inheriting or transmitting any property." "Slaves shall always be reputed and considered real estate: shall be as such, subject to be managed according to the rules

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prescribed by law, and they may be seized and sold as real estate.” “No owner of slaves shall hire his slaves to themselves under a penalty of twenty-five dollars, for each offence.” “No slave can be party in a civil suit, or witness in a civil or criminal matter against any white person.”

A freeholder may seize and correct any slave found absent from his usual place of work or residence, without some white person, and if the slave resist, or try to escape, he may use arms, and if the slave assault or strike him he may kill the slave. It is lawful to fire upon runaway negroes who are armed, and upon those who, when pursued, refuse to surrender. “Slaves, or free colored persons are punishable with death, for wilfully burning or destroying any stock of poudce or building.”

“The punishment of a slave for striking a white person, shall be for the first and second offence at the discretion of the court,^{*} but not extending to life or limb, and for the third offence death, but for grievously wounding or mutilating a white person, death for the first offence: provided, if the blow or wound is given in defence of the person or property of his master, or the person having charge, he is entirely justified.” Here we see that a slave may not resort to any physical resistance to protect himself, wife or children from the assaults or abuse of any palefaced drunken ruffian, without forfeiting his

* A court for the trial of a slave consists of one Justice of the Peace, and three freeholders, and the justice and one freeholder can convict, though the other two are for acquittal.

7 life; but if he deals out blows with brutal violence and effect upon any who shall meddle with a shilling's worth of his master's property, or shall kick his cat or dog, then “he is entirely justified!” Of how much more value is the life of a cat or a dog than that of a man!

The laws are very similar throughout all the slave states, and I shall mention but a few items in some of those. In Mississippi the law forbids a slave to cultivate cotton for his own use, and imposes a fine of fifty dollars on the master or overseer who permits it. For teaching a slave to read, imprisonment for one year. For using language having a

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tendency to promote discontent among free colored people, or insubordination among slaves, imprisonment at hard labor, not less than three, nor more than twenty-one years, or death at the discretion of the court. Every negro or mulatto, found in the state, not able to show himself entitled to freedom, may be sold as a slave. From the "Grand Gulf Miss. Advertiser," of Dec. 7th, 1838, I copy the following: "Committed to the jail of Chickasaw Co., Edmund, Martha, John and Louisa, the man 50, the woman 35, John 3 years old, Louisa 14 months. They say they are from a free State and were decoyed to this State, &c." Here is a family committed to prison, for no crime but of being decoyed to that state, doubtless to speculate upon, and the state seizes on them, shuts them up in a prison, and if in that condition they should not be able to prove their freedom, they must be sold into slavery to pay their jail fees; and if they do not prove that they were free, they will be sold for the same purpose, unless some person should come forward and redeem them. Let it be borne in mind, that it is not necessary in any of the slave states to prove a man, woman or child to be slaves, to make them such; but those who are suspected, must prove that they are free, or be enslaved.

The following advertisement is from the Mobile Register of July 21st, 1837:

"WILL BE SOLD CHEAP FOR CASH in front of the Court House of Mobile County, on the 22d day of July next, one mulatto man named HENRY HALL, who says he is free; his owner or owners, if any, having failed to demand him, he is to be sold according to the 8 statute in such case made and provided, (*to pay Jail fees, board, advertisement, &c.*)

I knew several cases of the kind while I lived in Florida. I will mention one which will illustrate something like the process attending such cases.

A colored man by the name of William Cook went from Virginia to Apalachicola as seaman, on board of a schooner. From thence he came to Pensacola; having, as he said, left his free papers with the captain. He was there taken up and put in jail by Peter Woodbine the jailor. He was kept there for several months when the jailor was removed

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and another appointed in his place. Woodbine then took Cook to the house in which he lived and there confined him in a garret by a chain. He was kept there a prisoner about one year; when an individual of the place succeeded in obtaining his free papers at the expense of about forty dollars. About this time he had a fit of sickness, which, with his long confinement, brought on the dropsy, and the probability was, that he would soon die, and so they would have no one living to charge the expense to. In that condition he was brought to me—after having his system well filled with mercury by the M. D.'s without hope of being remunerated for their practice. He was now a fit subject for Cayenne, Lobelia, and steam, which was used in the most liberal manner to good advantage, and after reducing him to his original dimensions, and restoring him to tolerable good health without any compensation, other than the satisfaction of administering to the necessity of a suffering fellow being, I advised him to go on board of a vessel immediately and leave the place. But he was not permitted to get off in that way. For the lawyer, the doctor, the printer, and the kidnapping Woodbine had bills of more than two hundred dollars against him. For being advertised in the Pensacola Gazette, he was charged over thirty dollars, and Woodbine charged him 37 1–2 cents per day during his confinement. He was then hired to the U. S. Government to work at the navy yard in that place to pay the above bill, &c.

It will be recollected that Florida. was at that time a territory of the United States;—governed by the United States laws, and administered by United States officers. This poor man suffered under these laws,—not because he had done any thing wrong—but because he had happened to leave behind him an ink and paper proof of his manhood—kept a prisoner, bound with irons one year, his health nearly destroyed—burthened with lawyer's, doctor's, printer's, kidnappers' bills and jail fees; and then compelled by the administration of these laws, to work for the government to pay the cost! This is but one of the many occurrences of a similar character which are constantly taking place.

In Alabama, “for attempting to teach a free colored person or slave to spell, read, or write; the fine is not less than \$250, nor more than \$500!”

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“Any free colored person found with slaves in a kitchen, out-house or negro quarters, without a written permission from the master or overseer of said slaves, and any slave found without such a permission with a free negro on his premises, shall receive fifteen lashes for the first offence, and thirty-nine for each subsequent offence; to be inflicted by any master, overseer or member of any patrol company.”

The slaves are not allowed to be taught to spell or read in any of the slave states, and yet the law is much more severe upon them than it is upon those who have the means and ability to read and know them. And often the first knowledge they have of an existing law, is when its punishment is inflicted on them. In the state of Virginia, there are seventy-one offences which are punishable with death, when committed by slaves, and nothing more than fine or imprisonment when committed by white persons.

In Georgia, the law “forbids the assembling of negroes under any pretence for *divine worship*, contrary to the act regulating patrols, and each may be whipped twenty lashes for attempting to assemble for divine worship.”

For simply attempting, without the performance, to teach, to spell, read or write, or the assembling for divine worship, one comes the fine and lash—according to “the statute in such case made and provided.”

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“Any person who sees more than seven men slaves without a white person, in a high road, may whip each person twenty lashes.”

The slave code of South Carolina reads thus:

“Slaves shall be deemed, sold, taken, reputed, adjudged in law to be CHATTELS PERSONAL in the hands of their owners and possessors, their executors, administrators and assigns, *to all intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever.*” And “if any person not authorized, shall beat one of these *chattels personal* so as to unfit him for *labor*, or

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disable him from working, he shall pay fifteen shillings a day to the *owner*, for the slave's lost time, and the charge of his cure." Not for the protection of the slave from the abuse, assault, or maiming his person, but for the damage done to him as the property of his owner. The slave has no redress whatever.

Their condition may be further illustrated by the following advertisements from the Charleston, S.C. papers, unblushingly blazoned forth to the world.

"Twenty Dollars Reward! Ran away from the Subscriber, the 14th instant, a negro girl named Molly, 16 or 17 years of age. *Slim made, LATELY BRANDED ON THE LEFT CHEEK, thus, R, and a piece taken off her ear on the same side, and the same letter on the inside of both her legs.*" Another advertisement reads:

"To Planters and Others. — *Wanted fifty negroes.* Any persons having *sick negroes*, considered *incurable* by their respective physicians, (their owners of course,) and wishing to dispose of them, Dr. Stillman will pay cash for negroes affected with scrofula or king's evil, confirmed hypocondriachism, apoplexy, or diseases of the brain, kidneys, spleen, stomach and intestines, bladder and its appendages, diarrhea, dysentery, &c. *The highest cash price will be paid as above.*"

What in the name of common sense could Dr. Stillman want of "incurable negroes" by the fifties, so much as to offer the "highest cash price" for them. Reader, what would you think, if you had a sister or mother who had been pronounced "incurable" by her physician, and as you were seated by her side, watching over the wasting form as life ebbed away, anxious to administer to her 11 last request, some person should rap at the door and inquire after the condition of the patient;—and on being told that there was no hope, that the physician had pronounced her incurable, the inquirer should say to you I am in want of such persons, and "will pay the highest *cash price*" for your sick friend, and thus relieve you from further anxiety on her account. Imagine what would be the emotions that would then arise in your breast.

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But a prospectus of the medical college located in Charleston, dispels from our mind all doubt as to the purpose for which Dr. Stillman wants so many of those “incurable negroes.”—It reads thus:

“Some advantages of a peculiar character are connected with this institution, which it may be proper to point out. No place in the United States offers as great opportunities for the acquisition of anatomical knowledge. Subjects being obtained from among the colored population in sufficient numbers *for every purpose*, and proper dissections carried on *without offending any individuals in the community!*”

A majority, (if I mistake not,) of the inhabitants of South Carolina are colored people; they may be bought up by “fifties,” prepared for any kind of operation, regardless of sex or age “*for every purpose,*” no matter what, without offending any individuals in the community!

Remember, reader, that these subjects are *chattels personal in the hands of their owners or possessors*, and therefore may be stretched on the dissecting table, with life extinct or distinct, warm or cold, old or young, male or female, exposed to the gaze of a crowd of inexperienced students and operators, and carved up amidst heartless gibes, by experimenting knaves, “without offending any individuals in the community.” Of what must the feelings of such a community be composed? Was ever such soulless, insulting, revolting diabolism discovered among the most uncivilized and barbarous tribes upon the earth in any age of the world? And such things are not done in a corner, but put forth in the public journals, proclaimed to the whole world from a country professing democracy, christianity, and the largest kind of liberty “to all the inhabitants thereof.”

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It was my intention to insert a specimen of the laws of each slave-breeding and slave-trading state, but I find it will occupy too much space in this brief view; suffice it to say, that the laws are very similar in all those states. It may be thought, however, that I have made these extracts from the southern section, where the laws are worse than in the more

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northern. But such is not the case to any extent. I have mentioned that in Virginia slaves are punished with death for 71 offences while the whites are only punished with fine or imprisonment.

And in Maryland, where slavery is said to possess its mildest form, we find state laws of the following character.

“Any slave, for rambling in the night or riding horseback without leave, or running away, may be punished by whipping, cropping and branding in the cheek, or otherwise, not rendering him unfit for labor.”

“Any slave convicted of petty treason, murder, or willfully burning of dwelling houses, may be sentenced to have his right *hand cut off, to be hanged in the usual manner, the head severed from the body, the body divided into four quarters, and the head and quarters stuck up in the most public place* in the county where such act was committed.”

Here we see the slave deprived even the privilege of having access to the law in self defence, not allowed to learn his letters; and, for violating a law which he could not read, and very probably knows but little or nothing of, till he is compelled to feel its effects, by having the right hand cut off, being hung up by the neck, his head severed from his body, the body cut into four quarters, and the head and each quarter stuck up in the most public place; no matter whether the victim be young or old, male or female, if it is only a slave, *that's all!*

Has the reader made up his or her mind yet, as to the condition of the slave? If not, examine the following testimony of the Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky, a large majority of whom were slaveholders.

“ *Mangling, imprisonment, starvation, every species of torture, may be inflicted upon the slave, and he has no redress.* They suffer all that can be inflicted by wanton caprice, by grasping avarice, by brutal lust, by malignant spite, and by insane anger. Their

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happiness is the sport of every whim, and the prey of every passion that may occasionally or habitually infest the master's bosom.”*

John Randolph of Virginia, himself a large slaveholder, speaking of the system, he says, “Despotism, as well as power and prosperity, hardens the heart, but avarice deadens it to every feeling but the thirst for riches. Avarice alone could have produced the slave trade. Avarice alone can drive as it does drive this infernal traffic; and the wretched victims of it, like so many posthorses, whipped to death in a mail coach. Ambition has its cover-sluts in the pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war; but where are the trophies of avarice? The hand-cuffs, the manacle, and the blood-stained cowhide.”*

* It is probable experience had made this familiar.

President Thomas Jefferson, another large slave-holder, said, “the whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions; the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other.” Such is the fruit of the corrupt tree of slavery. And such usages, laws, feelings, and treatment are all natural to the system; and it cannot be kept in existence without their aid.

When human beings are chattelized, it becomes necessary in order to keep them so, to prop up and surround the accursed system with cow-hides, gags, and thumbscrews; with chains, prisons, and starvation; with edgetools, halter and buck shot; with branding irons, muskets, and blood hounds' teeth; these and numerous kindred means and measures which are constantly brought into requisition, ministering pain, degradation, and misery; guilt, wretchedness and death in various revolting forms, do not constitute the sin and guilt of slavery. No! we must go beyond these and examine the cause. The great wrong and horrible outrage was, and is consummated when man is unmade, when he is chattelized, when his humanity is taken away and he becomes a thing; then the greatest possible

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wrong is done to the 2 14 man, and the highest insult offered to his Maker, and utter contempt of GOD and his magnificent works!

By whom was this present system of American chattel slavery established? And on whom does the guilt of its present existence rest?

The solution of these questions may reflect some light on the subject, and lead to a consideration of the importance of immediate individual action in aid of the cause of right and humanity. If so, my object in writing this will be obtained.

Altho' chattel slavery existed in this country 167 years before the formation of the present form or government, yet for my present purpose it will not be necessary to go further back than that formation.

A great and serious error exists in the minds of American people generally, especially the northern portion; that this government was formed on liberal principles; and to establish freedom for all. By a perusal of the declaration which prefaces the constitution, any one would conclude that such was the fact; but 57 years experience has fully demonstrated the contrary, and it would be doing violence to our judgment to come to any other conclusion, considering who were the actors in that drama.

I presume it will not be necessary to use much time or argument to show that slaveholders are necessarily tyrants; that he who usurps absolute control over his fellow men, that he who demands and extorts the most implicit submission from those who have no means or ability to resist his commands—that he who monopolizes the flesh, blood and bones, the body, will and mind of his fellow man, subjecting them all to his despotic sway, is a tyrant in theory and in fact. And I see no reason why any candid, common-sense person should not come to the same conclusion. Admitting that such despotic persons are tyrants, what ought we to expect of a compact or government formed or framed by them, especially when their interest and power were at stake? Is it reasonable to suppose that they would readily make a compact and form a union that would deprive them of much of

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their properly and the power to exercise any control over it? A few facts in relation to the formation and 15 administration of this government, will make it apparent that it was not designed to extend and secure “the blessings of liberty” to all its inhabitants, but on the contrary, was designed and adapted to hold a part of them as *slaves* in the condition of “*chattels personal*.”

The Declaration of Independence, by which the colonies formally renounced their allegiance to Great Britain, was made July 4th, 1776. Soon after, July 12th, Congress appointed a committee to draw up articles of confederation. But this being found inadequate to the wants of the States under their new circumstances, a convention was called to meet in Philadelphia, in June 17th, 1787, to remodel the government. It continued its sittings in secret sessions^{*} till September the 17th. Twelve States were represented in it, eight of which were slaveholding States. The convention was composed of forty delegates, of whom twenty-nine were from the slave states, and a majority of slaveholders. When met, they chose a slaveholder to preside over their deliberations;—what could be expected of such a convention in behalf of human rights? *Slave breeding, slave trading, and slave holding*, did then, and does now constitute the staple interest of more than half the States represented in Congress. The man must have an extraordinary stretch of credulity who could believe that such a convention would form a government for the support of justice and equal rights.

* They were in Pennsylvania then. and the ears of a free people were not to be trusted to listen to the discussions bearing on freedom and slavery, while making the compromise.

“The constitution of the United States was completed and signed by the Slave-holding President, September 17th, 1787. The preamble is as follows:—

“We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish *justice*, ensure *domestic tranquility*, provide for the *common defence*, promote the *general*

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welfare, and secure the blessings of *liberty* to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish the following Constitution for the United States of America.”

All very plausible; but see what that Convention understood by this, and whether the Slaves were included.

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Article I., Section ii., clause 3, of the Constitution runs thus:

“Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included in this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, *three-fifths of all other persons.*”

Rufus King, a member of the Convention, says,—“These persons are the Slaves.”

The meaning of this clause of the Constitution is given in the practical operations of the Government, from its foundation to the present moment, and it is this—one freeman, owner of 5 slaves in Virginia, counts as much in the basis of representation, as 4 freemen in Massachusetts—3 for his 5 slaves, and one for himself; one man in Georgia, owner of 10 slaves, counts as many as 7 men in New York who had no slaves; one man in Alabama, owner of twenty slaves, as many as 13 men in Pennsylvania who hold no slaves; and so on. “Three-fifths” of the Slaves are added to the owners to increase their numbers and influence, in the proportion of three to five, six to ten, twelve to twenty, thirty to fifty, sixty to one hundred, &c. One man owning 1000 slaves in Tennessee is equal to 601 freemen in Ohio who own no Slaves; 10,000 men in the Slave States, owners of 50,000 Slaves, are counted equal to 40,000 freemen holding no Slaves in the non-Slave States. In round numbers, there are 300,000 Slaveholders, and 3,000,000 of Slaves in the United States. In computing the number of inhabitants to form the basis of representation, these 300,000 Slaveholders are reckoned equal to 2,100,000 freemen that hold no Slaves;

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or, in exercising the elective franchise in the election of a President and Congress of the United States, these 300,000 Slaveholders, in effect, cast as many votes as 2,100,000 freemen who are non-Slaveholders. So in the exercise of the legislative, judicial, and executive functions of the Government, the 300,000 Slave breeders wield an influence equal to that of 2,100,000 men who abhor Slavery. Thus, this clause of the Constitution offers a reward to Slave-breeding, Slave-trading, and Slave-holding, by proportioning a man's political influence to the number of his Slaves. It considers a man qualified to aid in accomplishing the ends proposed in the preamble, i. e., "to establish justice," and "to secure the blessings of liberty," in proportion to his skill and success in stealing and enslaving men!

What greater encouragement could the Constitution have given to Slavery, except by saying five-fifths instead of three? As the article now stands, (and it cannot be changed, except by the overthrow of the Government, while any State sees fit to hold Slaves,) it considers a man as having multiplied himself in proportion as he blots others from the sum of human existence. Four men in New York, who by honest industry accumulate fortunes in houses and lands, however just and upright they may be, can equal, in political importance, only one man in a Slave State, who, by fraud and violence, reduces five men to Slavery. One man in New Orleans, who, by unsurpassed villany, has turned 1000 immortal beings into beasts, is invested by this act with as much political powers as 601 men in Boston, who, by honest dealing, have become fifty times as rich in gold and silver. I reduce 10,000 horses to the condition of "personal chattels," and the Constitution gives me no reward; I still count but one man in the Government; but if I can turn the bodies and souls of 10,000 MEN into goods and chattels, it rewards me with the power of 6,001 honest freemen in the legislative, judicial, and executive councils of the nation.

Had the clause read "three-fifths" of horses, who can doubt that every man would have sought, to increase his stock of horses? The owner of 1000 horses would have been equal to 601 men who owned no horses. It cannot be doubted that such a premium would have acted as a motive to breeding, and stealing horses; but the premium is offered to Slave-

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breeding and to Manstealing, and it has acted as a mighty stimulant to the perpetuation of this “sum of all villiany.” It offers the highest possible reward, not to justice and liberty, but to injustice and Slavery. By this fatal, terrible clause, the rule is established as the basis of the Government, that, the more human beings a man can steal and enslave, the 18 better is he qualified to wield political power—that men are qualified to vote, to legislate, to judge and execute, in proportion to the number of immortal beings whom they have converted into “chattels;” and by the power conferred on Slaveholders by this clause, they have, in half a century, increased the number of Slaves from 300,000 to 3,000,000, and enlarged the bounds of Slavery from 210,000 square miles, to more than 1,000,000.

According to the construction put upon it by the Convention, and by every department of the Government, it was designed to transfer their oppressors to the elective franchise of three-fifths of the Slaves, and to deny it to the two-fifths altogether. As J. Q. Adams says, “Their elective franchise was transferred to their masters, and the oppressors were to represent the oppressed.”

There are about thirty members at this time in Congress as the representatives of the “*three-fifths* of the Slaves, but in whose election the Slaves had no voice. The Slaves are added to the number solely to increase the power of the masters. “Three-fifths” of the Slaves are counted as *persons*, while, in all other respects, they are held and used as “*chattels*. ” Even in this, though called persons, they are counted as so many horses or mules.

Art. IV., Sect. 2:—

“No person *held to service or labor* in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from *such service or labor*, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom *such service or labor* may be due.”

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Who would suppose that this clause was designed to make, and has for half a century actually made the whole territory of the United States a hunting ground for Slaveholders? There is not one foot of land in this nation, where the fugitive can say—"I am free." "This clause," says Mr. Madison, "was expressly inserted to enable owners of Slaves to reclaim them." Whoever fills the presidential office is bound, by his oath, to *reenslave*, by person or by proxy, those who escape from their masters; and, if need be, call out the whole military force of the nation to execute this deed of infamy. 19 Thus did Washington and his compeers, for he was the Slaveholding President of the Convention that formed the compact, after spending \$30,000,000, and slaying over 200,000 human beings to obtain their own freedom, bind themselves and the nation to seize and return every Slave who should attempt to free himself by flight.

The history of the United States, in its efforts to return runaway slaves, is replete with incidents more thrilling than can be found upon the record of this world, and all done under authority of this article of the Constitution. Let one among many that have come under my notice suffice:—

A young female slave ran away from Maryland; came to Philadelphia; married there; became the mother of three children; had a happy and virtuous home. She was tracked by the two-legged blood-hounds of Slavery: was found, and brought before the court of that city. There she stood in the criminal's box, for claiming to be a human being rather than a piece of property. Her husband was by her side; two children hanging by her gown, and one folded in her arms, and she about to become the mother of a fourth. She was condemned as the Slave of the claimant, and given up to him to be taken from her husband and children, to toil on the plantations of the South as a Slave. That her child to be born might not become a Slave, the woman was ordered to be imprisoned till it should be born. There in a dungeon she gave birth to a child. The next day her babe was taken from her and put into the Poor-House, and the mother was consigned to the Slaveholder. He took her on his way towards the South. Maternal anguish gave sharpness to her mind

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and vigor to her body. She escaped the first night from the monster, and in darkness and alone, through woods and swamps made her way back to Pennsylvania. The Slaveholder came back, and watched at the door of the Poor-House, knowing well that she would return where her heart was. But the woman was kept away by the Abolitionists, and was sent to New York. To elude the keenness of the Slavehunters, and get the child to her was the next step. That child was *drugged* to a deep sleep, put into a *travelling 20 bag*, given to the charge of a woman who was in the secret, by her taken on board of a steamer, amid the Slave-hunters, unknown to them and unsuspected, and by her carried to New York, and put into the hands of its mother. She fled with her babe to Massachusetts, was tracked by the Slave-hunters, but was ultimately landed safe under the protection of Britain, in Upper Canada, where her husband and other children joined her, and where they now live.

Art. IV., Sect. 4:—

“The United States shall protect each State against invasion; and on application of the Legislature, or of the Executive thereof, against *domestic violence*. ”

This clause of the Constitution was designed to guard against efforts of the Slaves to gain their freedom by arms, as the former article was to guard against their obtaining it by flight. It pledges the whole power of the nation to destroy the Slaves, if in imitation of Washington, they attempt to assert and defend their liberty by violence. By these two clauses the whole nation is pledged to suppress all efforts of Slaves to emancipate themselves; and yet it adopts for its watch-word, “Resistance to Tyrants is obedience to God.” They fought seven years to assert their own freedom, and their right of armed-defence; and then entered into a compact to murder their Slaves if they attempted to defend themselves. No wonder Jefferson exclaimed, “What an inconsistent being is man! who will spend oceans of treasure and blood to free himself, and then inflict upon his fellows a bondage, one hour of which is more intolerable than ages of that which he arose

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in rebellion to oppose! There is not an attribute of the Almighty that could take part with Slaveholders in a contest with their Slaves.”

Did the framers of the Constitution intend that the government should protect and encourage men in breeding, buying, and holding slaves? They did.

It is observable that the word Slave or Slavery does not once occur in it. The reason is given in the debates on Art. 4, sect. 2, in the Convention of North Carolina, 21 called to ratify or reject the Constitution. A Mr. Iddell remarked in the debate, that

“Though the word Slave be not mentioned, this is the meaning of it. The Northern Delegates, owing to their particular scruples on the subject of Slavery, did not choose the word Slave to be mentioned. This clause in the Constitution was inserted for the express purpose of enabling Slaveholders to obtain from the *free* States their runaway slaves.”

So the Northern Delegates, whose consciences would not allow them to insert the word Slave or Slavery in the organic law of the Government, consented to wrap up all the crimes, the miseries and horrors of Slavery, in the less offensive garb of “ *three-fifths of all other persons*”—“*the importation of such persons*”—and “*persons held to service or labor*. ” Clothed in this “purple and fine linen”—the infant monster was carefully provided for as the nation's pet, and the American Constitution was made the Gibraltar of American Slavery.

James Madison, afterwards President of the Republic for eight years, was a member, and kept an account of the debates from day to day. His report has been published, and the debates, as reported by him, relative to the meaning and intent of the Articles in the Constitution above alluded to, are before me. According to these, the members did understand those provisions as *designed* to bind the nation to the support of Slavery, and they were introduced as matters of *compromise* between the North and South. In the debate of July 11th, 1787, Madison himself said, “ *The institution of Slavery and its consequences formed the line of demarcation*. ” Every speaker admits that those

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provisions refer to Slaves—that they are intended to give security and value to Slave property—that they bind the nation to protect Slaveholders in enslaving men, and to give effect to those provisions, touching the basis of representation, runaway Slaves, the Slave-trade, and Slave insurrections. “The division,” it was said, “lay between the Northern and Southern.” The Slaves, by that Convention, in the language of one of its members, were regarded as “mere property, not free agents, having no personal liberty, no facility of acquiring property, and, like other property, themselves entirely at the will of the master.” One 22 member “lamented that such property existed, but as it did exist, it required security in the Constitution.” One says, “If the Northern States consult their interest, they will not oppose the increase of Slaves, which will increase the commodities of which they will become the carriers. Another contended, that the “importation of Slaves from Africa would be for the interests of the whole nation. The more Slaves, the more produce to employ the carrying trade.” One said, “It was better to let the Southern States import Slaves, than to part with them, if they made that a *sine qua non*. ” One Slaveholder said, “He had prejudices against the Northern States before he came to the Convention, but he had found them as liberal and candid as any men whatever,” i. e., as ready to countenance, support, and help to perpetuate Slavery. One man, Luther Martin, said, (honored be his name!)—

“We appealed to the Supreme Being for His assistance in our struggle for our own liberty, and now, when we had scarcely arisen from our knees from supplicating His mercy and protection, *we were inserting in the Constitution of our Government provisions*, not only putting it out of its power to restrain and prevent the Slave-trade, but even encouraging that most infamous traffic, by giving States *power and influence in the Union in proportion as they cruelly and wantonly sported with the rights of men*. It is a solemn mockery of, and an insult to, that God whose protection we had then implored; and could not fail to hold us up to detestation, and *render us contemptible to every true friend of liberty in the world*. ”

There spoke the spirit of truth and of prophecy.

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That Convention acted in secret, but its debates and doings have been given to the world: and as to the principles by which it was actuated, and the measures which it adopted in reference to the rights and liberties, the temporal and eternal destiny of the injured and unoffending Slaves in their midst, no band of highway robbers ever showed more utter disregard to truth, to honor, to justice, and humanity, than did that assemblage of forty men, headed by George Washington. They pledged a nation to the support of a system “made up (as Rowland Hill said,) of every crime that treachery, cruelty, and murder can invent,” and which (as Pitt said) “is an outrage upon justice, and only another name for fraud, robbery, and murder.” The debates in that Convention, 23 as reported by Madison, are enough to call down upon it and the Government which it framed, the execration of mankind and the vengeance of insulted Heaven. I could give many more extracts from it; but enough has been quoted to show that the Convention intended to make “ *Slave-holding, Slave-breeding and Slave-trading, the foundation of the policy of the Federal Government.* ”

Through the political power conferred by these articles of the Constitution, Slaveholders have ever controlled the Government. At this moment, there is but a very small minority in either house of Congress, but what are practical Slave-holders or abettors of Slavery. Of the eleven who have filled the office of President of the United States, seven were Slave-holders; and of the fifty-seven years of its national existence, forty-five have been administered by them. The slave-holders as a class, constitute only one fortieth of the population; yet on every question of national interest, domestic or foreign, of peace or war, of life or death, they constitute the whole government.

In 1789, the present government of the United States, went into operation with its Slave-holding President. In 1800, the seat of government was removed from a free seat and crowded in between two Slave States, at the dictation of Slave-breeders, traders, and holders, for the better security of their human *chattels personal*, and to make it convenient for them to attend that human flesh market in person, while they were framing laws for

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the furtherance of the trade. And for \$400 a year, license is there given to carry on the wholesale and retail business of buying and selling men, women, and children in lots to suit purchasers, while the prisons built with the people's money are used for store houses to pack in their two legged locomotive wares to prevent their "pursuit of happiness."

I know of no language adequate to express my feelings of abhorrence of a government like this; professing republicanism, democracy, and Christianity, while practicing such bare-faced, cold hearted villany upon the people at the people's expense from year to year, taking advantage of the weak and inoffensive.

24

A brief glance at the treatment and removal of some of the Indians, may not be amiss in this place.

"The fundamental law of Slavery is, *that "the child shall follow the condition of the mother.*" If the mother is a slave, her master owns her child, and all her posterity. Some years ago, a young female slave fled from her Christian(?) civilized(?) owner in Georgia to find protection among the savages in the swamps and everglades of Florida. She was welcomed to the wigwams and sympathies of these wild men. She became the wife of their chief, and by him had a daughter. That daughter became the wife of *Osceola*, who ultimately became the chief of his tribe. It was found out by the Georgia slaveholder that she was his slave; and she was seized by a government officer, to be restored. Osceola attacked the party that had bereaved him of his wife, and retook her. The cry of Indian massacre was raised by slaveholders. The Union rushed to the defence of the "*peculiar institution*," proclaimed war against the Seminoles; carried it on With unmitigated cruelty for five years, under the leadership of the slaveholder, Jackson; and, at an expense of forty millions of dollars, exterminated the tribe, that it might no longer be an asylum for the fugitives from whips and chains.

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In 1836, a member of Congress stated in his place, that “it was common, under pretext of reclaiming fugitive slaves, to seize and carry off and enslave the wives and children of the Indians. The famous Osceola himself had his wife taken from him by a government officer, and by that officer she was chained to a log. This has caused the Florida war, which has produced such a waste of treasure, the loss of so much national and individual honor, and of so many valuable lives.”

In the prosecution of that war the Union sent to Cuba, and obtained a pack of *bloodhounds* as auxiliaries to her human troops. Osceola, under the protection of a promise of safety and a flag of truce, came to the American camp, was treacherously seized, chained, and lodged in a dungeon, and there left to die. Many bloody details of that war are before me. I cannot forbear giving one or two specimens of the spirit in which it was conducted.

25

An officer engaged in connection with Cuba bloodhounds in hunting the Indians, says,—

“The Indians have a town on the *Oak-la-wa-ha*, have collected their women and children there, and are planting and feel secure. (It was a period of truce.) If broken and dispersed, their wives captured, and fields laid waste, I am certain they will all come in immediately. It is worth the trial, and the season is fair now.”

On the departure of a company from Charleston, S. C., to aid in butchering the Indians, for harboring the runaway slaves of Christian (?) whites, the *Charlestown Observer*, the leading Presbyterian paper of the south, says,—

“It may not be improper to suggest the propriety of publicly commending in prayer, on the Sabbath, this expedition. No doubt that petitions for the safety, and return of the *patriotic band* who have gone forth from the midst of us, will meet with a cordial and earnest response!”

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This reminds me of an incident in the Convention which formed the Union. It was found very difficult to adjust slavery and the slave-trade, and to give them their appropriate place in the confederacy. The North and the South could not agree. Some northern members were determined to resist all compromise with slavery. The southerners were fixed never to come into the Union without strong guarantees to their great business of slave-breeding and slave-trading. As all hopes seemed about to be given up, one shrewd member proposed that they should have a season of *prayer*, and invoke the aid of the Almighty on their efforts to effect a compromise. It was agreed to. That Convention of slave-breeders and slave-traders bowed the knee in prayer. They arose, and soon the desired compromise was made and the Union formed, whose "vital and animating principle was Slavery. "

Cherokee, Greek, Choctaw, and Chickasaw Indians owned extensive tracts of land in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. These Indian tribes had turned attention to agriculture, and to education, and had produced some eminent men, the writings of some 326 of whom are now at hand. They were in a fair way to rival their white neighbors in all the arts of civilized life. But slaves found that sympathy, justice, and humanity among these Indian tribes which were denied them among their professedly Christian masters. They fled to the Indians for protection, and found it. These professedly Christian whites, therefore demanded the expulsion of the Indians. Under the administration of Jackson, a slaveholder, the Indians were expelled at the point of the bayonet, driven from the homes and graves of their fathers to bury their sorrows and bodies together beneath the inhospitable prairies of the far West. Their appeals, petitions, and entreaties to Congress for protection are affecting, but they prayed to those whose hearts were of stone, who were pledged to do any thing and every thing for the protection of slavery. They were driven off; and their cultivated fields, their houses, and their cattle, were confiscated to slaveholders. The following are specimens of their feelings, and of the manner of their removal. I extract from a paper published near the scene:—

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“When the last effective blow was struck, and they looked for the last time upon the graves of their ancestors, aged men and stern warriors, untaught to shed a tear of grief, placed their hands upon their faces and wept like children. In the winter of 1836, 17,000 of the Greek Indians were removed beyond the Mississippi river by contractors who cared more for the gold of the government than for the lives of the Indians. They were driven in an inclement season of the year, poorly fed, poorly clothed, and their naked feet left foot-prints of blood upon the frozen soil; while the aged and infirm were left by the wayside to die in the wilderness.”

The following is an earnest appeal of two Cherokee chiefs to Congress:—

“Notwithstanding the cries of our people, the lower classes of whites, assisted by constables and peace-officers, are flogging the Cherokees with cow-hides, hickories and clubs. This barbarous treatment is not confined to the men, but our women are stripped and flogged without law or mercy. We talk plainly as chiefs, and apply to you for protection.”

27

Many thrilling facts touching the spoliation and removal of these children of the forest—by the American government—solely for the protection of slavery, might be given.

More recently we have seen the damning deeds perpetrated by the annexation of Texas, and a war of conquest and extermination waged and carried on against the republic of Mexico to extend and eternalize American chattel slavery upon her territory where it had been abolished for seventeen years, to gratify a few steel hearted slave-breeders, and human flesh mongers; and already many hundreds of human victims have been sacrificed upon the demon's altar. Treasures, tears, and blood have been poured out; the atmosphere of Mexico has been poisoned, and its soil polluted with carnage; and but here and there can a voice be heard, a finger moved, or a sign seen in opposition to the hell-born means and measures which are undermining, and overthrowing the peace, liberties,

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and rights of nine-tenths of the people. This nation seems to have all its life streams interred by a political leprosy, and a spurious Christianity "From foot-sole up to crown," hastening on to its ruin with rail-road speed, like the infuriated Jews before their downfall and destruction as a nation. And the lamentation that was poured out over Jerusalem would be applicable to this people at this time, seeing that "darkness covers the land, and gross darkness the people." "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now are they hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side. And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children with thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation."

The history of this country for the last two years has demonstrated too plainly to doubt, that the lovers of power, and advocates of slavery are determined, at all hazards, to unite their energies, and at the expense of 28 the people's money, rights, and liberties, to establish the institution of slavery upon a foundation that shall not be touched by the finger of freedom. And surely they can ask nor desire nothing more than is granted, as fast as they demand it. Every office of the government is filled at their pleasure and dictation; from the President to the light keeper. The wealth, and the physical power of the nation are at their control. The last crowning, murderous act of Congress, which has been echoed all over this country by its demagogues and leaders, should excite to the most vigorous acts and measures in all the friends of humanity. The navy and army, with any amount of increase, and money, the merchant vessels and steamboats are placed unreservedly at the control of a human flesh dealer, by the Congress of these United States, with precious few dissenting voices. *Hang all the monuments of your country's pride in sackcloth and mourning* till you dig up from the dust its character which has disappeared from the gaze of the civilized world.

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Shame on the costly mockery of piling stone on stone To those who won our liberty, the
heroes dead and gone, While we look coldly on, and see law-shielded ruffians slay The
men who fain would win their own, the heroes of to-day!

Are we pledged to craven silence? O, fling it to the wind, The parchment wall that bars us
from the least of human-kind— That makes us cringe, and temporize, and humbly stand at
rest, While Pity's burning flood of words is red hot in the breast?

The slaves, their condition, the process and power by which they are made and kept as
such, has been briefly glanced over in the foregoing pages, which is to me, far from being
an agreeable task, and I should not have done it, had I not supposed there was still a
remedy, or at least a partial one, within reach of the people. True, we cannot restore to
the slaves the time of which they have been robbed, the compensation of their unpaid
toil, the friends from whom they have been sundered, nor the lives of those who have
been sacrificed to the cupidity, avarice, or passions of others. But we can demand their
restoration to themselves, (the right owners.) And to whom should they look for aid, under
God? I answer 29 to the working classes. The working men and working women,^{*} others
are merely stumbling blocks and drones, not productive of good to any extent. They, like
the locusts of Arabia, eat up every green thing which comes within their reach, or which
they have by slant of winds been blown to.

* I do not mean by working men and working women to include those only who
vigorously apply their muscular and physical powers and abilities for the acquisition of
the necessities of life, but all those who are in some way employed for the benefit of
man,—contributing something useful for themselves and theirs, without injuring their
fellow creatures in any way. And to exclude those who are preying upon the honest
producer, luxuriating upon the industry and labor of others, without rendering them
anything equivalent; such we find monopolizing power, and using it to grind the face of the
poor, and take the advantage of the less idle and more useful members of society.

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I do not appeal to the laboring classes simply because they are the only productive people, but there are other considerations. You, my working friends, are under obligations which none others can discharge, and owe an imperious duty to the country, to the slave, to your children, to yourselves, to humanity, and to God. No longer attempt to shield yourselves behind an organized government; the government rests upon your shoulders. So long as you uphold the present government, you uphold slavery, and endanger your own liberties! In fact you cannot be free with this mountain of iniquity and its increasing expenses resting upon you. It is by your aid and support that there are now three millions of human beings in your country chattelized. It is by your aid and support that more than two hundred new-born infants in your country, daily, have their humanity wrung out, and are hurled down and classed among marketable wares and commodities. It is by your aid and support that a disgraceful, barbarous, and uncalled for war, is now waged and carried on at the expense of half a million dollars a day, for the sole object of extending slavery and the slave power. And it is you that have to fight the battles, and foot the bills into the bargain. Have you thought of that fact? While you are paying your servants at Washington eight dollars per day to do the bidding of their, and your southern masters, they demand of you or your friends to be ready to march to 3* 30 Mexico, encounter the sufferings of a campaign, and diseases incident to a great change of climate, with many expenses, privations and aggravations; and the risk of being shot with poison copper bullets, at twenty-seven cents per day.

The chain, which you have been helping to secure upon the limbs of the southern chattled slaves, has its other end fastened upon your own. Is it reasonable even to doubt that after we have participated in depriving others of their inherent rights, that we shall continue in the enjoyment of ours? Are not the fixed laws of Con and nature plain before you? And when violated do they not demand redress? Are not the penalties substantially with their violation, that "with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again? And whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap?" Then let us cease, friends, to mete out wrong any more to the poor bond-men of this country, and sow no more whips, chains,

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blood-hounds and bullets; but rather “remember those that are in bonds as bound with them,” and act upon that invaluable rule which came down from heaven, viz., “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so unto them,” if placed in their condition.

The writer of this is, and always has been, a working man, has had much experience, passed through many trying scenes which have somewhat nerved him for further conflict, and by which he has endeavored to profit. He has, like one of former times, “suffered the loss of all things that he might win Christ,” by endeavoring to practice his precepts in love to Con and man. He has been in perils by sea, in perils by land, in perils among robbers, in perils among false brethren, in shipwrecks, in prisons, in leg fetters, in handcuffs, in pillory, in chains, has been robbed by individuals and governments, has been shot with musket balls and branded with hot irons. He has upon his person the mark of Mexican bullets and the American branding irons, within two inches of each other. He has left, a constitution much impaired by great exposure, repeated sickness, and severe treatment, the dependance and wants of a large 31 family, and bills which he cannot meet. Besides, he is constantly coming in contact with the conflicting views and feelings of the mass of the people, and receiving the sneers and scoffs of the popular rabble,—from members of the church and state, from the pulpit and the press, &c., &c. But none of these things move me from continuing, to the extent of my ability, to labor for the amelioration of the condition of my deeply injured brothers in affliction and wretchedness. In order to heed the dictates of conscience, respect the precepts of the gospel, and venerate Christianity, I renounce the present government of these United States, and the present American church, as anti-republican and anti-Christian,—being in covenant with death, and in agreement with hell—using their combined, oppressive, hypocritical, and bloody measures to crush the lingering, surviving hopes of the unfortunate and the helpless. For my life I cannot perceive how any man at the present time who is well informed, and has his eyes open, can consistently profess Christianity, or friendship to his fellow-men, and give his voluntary support to

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these dehumanising organizations. I class the American church and government together, because they are leagued together.

It is lamentable to see, as I pass among the people, the vast amount of ignorance and indifference in regard to the nature and workings of the system of slavery in this country, when the subject has been agitated for the last sixteen years. Why is it so? Have the less informed been dependant on their religious and political leaders? and have they been dumb on that subject, and proved recreant to their trust?

Come friends, what say you, shall we put on manly vigor, and determine to be *free men* and *free women*; and tear from our limbs and our minds the chain with which we are bound to the loathsome and putrid carcass of slavery now and for ever? If our fathers did make a compromise between freedom and slavery, we are not bound to sustain it. They never had the right to dispose of our liberties, nor any body's else. Then let us prove ourselves worthy of the age in which we live, and drink in the spirit of the following lines, no matter if we are branded as traitors and disorganizers.

32

Tho' we break our father's promise, we have nobler duties first; The traitor to Humanity is the traitor most accurst; Man is more than Constitutions; better rot beneath the sod, Than be true to Church and State while we are doubly false to God?.

We owe allegiance to the State, but deeper, truer, more, To the sympathies that God has set within our spirit's core, Our country claims our fealty; we grant it so, but then Before Man made us citizens, great Nature made us men.

He's true to God who's true to man; wherever wrong is done To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding Sun, That wrong is also done to us, and they are slaves most base, Whose love of Right is for themselves, and not for all the race.

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God works for all: Ye cannot hem the hope of being free With parallels of latitude, with mountain range or sea. Put golden padlocks on Truth's lips, be callous as you will, From soul to soul, o'er all the world, leaps one electric thrill.

Chain down your slaves with ignorance, ye cannot keep apart, With all your craft of tyranny, the human heart from heart. Out from the land of bondage 'tis decreed our slaves shall go, And signs to us are offered, as erst to Pharaoh.

'Tis ours to save our brethern, with peace and love to win Their darkened hearts from error, ere they harden it to sin; But, if man before his duty with listless spirit stands, Ere long the Great Avenger takes the work from out his hands.'

The anti-slavery press, and the true friends of the slave have never relaxed their efforts, but have gone to the extent of their ability. But the people's ears and eyes have been shielded from the true sound and light; or their hearts have been cased in steel, it must be one or both of these causes, or we should not be surrounded by such a state of things at the present time.

The reader may think me unkind or uncharitable in confounding the church with the state in holding and trafficking in slaves; and that the church, as such, does not aid in the abominable business. I do not confound them, the church and state have always been confounded since their formation, and I only mention the fact. Was not this government when formed cemented to the system of slavery by the prayers and precepts of the church? and has not this government ever since been receiving its plaudits and baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, with all its pollution and blood guiltiness, from the church?

33

The little space which I have allotted me here will permit me to say but little on this subject, although I have much material at hand, and experience to show their alliance.

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It will be seen by the debates in Congress, when the compact was formed, that the opposition of some of the non-slaveholding members prevented a formation of the union for a time, with its bloody provisions. But a season of special prayer over the subject was re-commenced and improved, which had such a soothing influence upon the hideous monster as to make him appear quite harmless, and so the compromise was made to legally and nationally chattelize 300,000 human beings. Has not the government ever since had the church praying over it, and its measures? Has not the government always hired some of the church's most choice spirits to preface all its deliberations with prayer? And has it not others on board of her man-killing ships? And others to sprinkle with holy unction her regiments of legalized human butchers? Are not the church and state in perfect harmony? And in fact does not the religious influence control the masses and give shape to, and mould the laws of the country? And where is the religion that opposes this present government in its gigantic strides over millions of crushed and helpless human beings? I answer, none but the anti-slavery men and women speak out and act out on this matter. They are up and active in obedience to him who said, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bound."

Have not all the religious denominations, north and south, been in full fellowship and communion until very recently? What has caused the slight change which has taken place? I affirm that it is through the means of a few stigmatized, fanatical abolitionists. When and where was any portion of the church heard and seen to speak, or act out upon this subject, and treat the system and its advocates as they infamously deserve? until the birth of the Liberator in 1830, which has ever since taken the lead with its straight-forward, unwavering, unflinching Editor, fronting the hottest of the battle for universal freedom and right, there was nothing heard from the northern church to invite the attention of the people. And we have yet to learn that any considerable portion of the large denominations oppose the system to any extent. When their members are loaded

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with irons, thrown into filthy and loathsome prisons, suffering all the insult and abuse that can be heaped upon them, and some even death itself, for daring to obey the precepts of *Christ*; and after one of their worthiest ministers has been murdered piece-meal, and fallen a martyr to the cause of freedom, humanity and right; he is spurned from their presence,—his funeral services denied in the house of his own denomination in this city of Boston, where he was known and read of all men. The fact is, the true friend of the slave has always found that the American church, as a body, both north and south, their worst opponent, and most bitter opposer,—in fact, “the bulwark of American slavery,” as testified by James G. Birney, formerly a slave-holder and church-member.

I cannot better give my views and opinions of the American religion than in the words of an exposition written by Frederick Douglass, the fugitive slave, who has for the last year astonished the old world with his eloquence and intellectual abilities. He says:—

“What I have said respecting and against religion, I mean strictly to apply to the *slaveholding religion* of this land, and with no possible reference to Christianity proper; for, between the Christianity of this land, and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible difference—so wide, that to recieve the one as good, pure, and holy, is of necessity to reject the other as bad, corrupt and wicked. To be the friend of the one, is of necessity to be the enemy of the other. I love the pure, peaceable, and impartial Christianity of Christ: I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, woman-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land. Indeed, I can see no reason, but the most deceitful one, for calling the religion of this land Christianity. I look upon it as the climax of all misnomers, 35 the boldest of all frauds, and the grossest of all libels. Never was there a clearer case of “stealing the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in.” I am filled with unutterable loathing when I contemplate the religious pomp and show, together with the horrible inconsistencies, which every where surround me. We have men-stealers for misisters, woman-whippers for missionaries, and cradle-plunderers for church-members. The man who wields the blood-clotted cow-skin during the week fills the pulpit on Sunday and claims to be a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus. The

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man who robs me of my earnings at the end of each week, meets me as class leader on Sunday morning, to show me the way of life, and the path of salvation. He who sells my sister, for purposes of prostitution, stands forth as the pious advocate of purity. He who proclaims it a religious duty to read the Bible, denies me the right of learning to read the name of God who made me. He who is the religious advocate of marriage, robs whole millions of its sacred influence, and leaves them to the ravages of wholesale pollution. The warm defender of the sacredness of the family relation is the same that scatters whole families,—sundering husbands and wives, parents and children, sisters and brothers,—leaving the hut vacant, and the hearth desolate. We see the thief preaching against theft, and the adulterer against adultery. We have men sold to build churches, women sold to support the gospel, and babes sold to purchase Bibles for the *poor heathen! all for the glory of God and the good of souls!* The slave auctioneer's bell and the church-going bell chime in with each other, and the bitter cries of the heart-broken slave are drowned in the religious shouts of his pious master. Revivals of religion and revivals in the slave-trade go hand in hand together. The slave prison and the church stand near each other. The clanking of fetters and the rattling of chains in the prison, and the pious psalm and solemn prayer in the church, may be heard at the same time. The dealers in the bodies and the souls of men, erect their stand in the presence of the pulpit, and they mutually help each other. The dealer gives his blood-stained gold to support the pulpit, and the pulpit, in return, covers his infernal 36 business with the garb of Christianity. Here we have religion and robbery the allies of each other—devils dressed in angels' robes, and hell presenting the semblance of paradise.

The Christianity of America is a Christianity of whose votaries it may be as truly said, as it was of the ancient Scribes and Pharisees, “They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. All their works they do to be seen of men.—

Dark and terrible as is this picture, I hold it to be strictly true of the overwhelming mass of professed Christians in America. They strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Could

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anything be more true of our churches? They would be shocked at the proposition of fellowshipping a *sheep* -stealer; and at the same time they hug to their communion a *man* -stealer, and brand me with being an infidel, if I find fault with them for it. They attend with Pharisaical strictness to the outward forms of religion, and at the same time neglect the weightier matters of law, judgment, mercy and faith. They are always ready to sacrifice, but seldom to show mercy. They are they who are represented as professing to love God whom they have not seen, whilst they hate their brother whom they have seen. They love the heathen on the other side of the globe. They can pray for him, pay money to have the Bible put into his hand, and missionaries to instruct him; while they despise and totally neglect the heathen at their own doors.

Such is, very briefly, my view of the religion of this land; and to avoid any misunderstanding, growing out of the use of general terms, I mean by the religion of this land, that which is revealed in the words, deeds and actions, of those bodies, north and south, calling themselves Christian churches, and yet in union with slave-holders. It is against religion, as presented by these bodies, that I have felt it my duty to testify."

Having been a careful observer of the religious movements and influence for many years, both north and south, I am compelled to believe the picture here given by friend Douglass strictly correct, and therefore I endorse it in full. JONATHAN WALKER.

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